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# Canada and the United Nations



## Introduction

As the Second World War was coming to an end, the need for a forum where the nations of the world could settle their differences through dialogue rather than military might was clear. And so, the United Nations (UN) was formed "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war," to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, to establish and maintain international law, and to promote social progress and better standards of life.

Four and a half decades later, examples of the UN's effectiveness are many. Through its development programs it has provided much-needed economic and technical assistance to Third World nations. Through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) alone, the United Nations saves the lives of 400 000 children from starvation and disease each year. It continues to pressure governments that do not respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of their peoples. Millions of refugees have been given protection and assistance by the UN. It has pioneered peacekeeping operations. And over the last 45 years, the UN has done more to codify international law than in all recorded history.

Yet the United Nations has in some respects fallen short of its potential. The gap between rich nations and poor remains undiminished. High birth rates, increasing desertification and stifling debt burdens threaten to undermine the future economic viability of developing nations. The Israel-Palestine question continues to haunt the prospect for lasting peace in the Middle East. The decision-making ability of the UN Security Council is often hamstrung by the veto rights of the superpowers. And General Assembly resolutions are often ignored by the countries they are directed towards.



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For some, criticizing the UN for what it has not achieved comes easier than applauding it for what it has achieved. Despite the criticisms, however, Canada remains committed to the United Nations. It is in the spirit of constructive internationalism that Canada reaffirmed its commitment by seeking a seat on the Security Council for 1989-90. It is in this spirit that Canada continues to contribute ideas, personnel and financial assistance to support the UN's many programs.

### **The Charter and Change**

The Charter of the United Nations was adopted at the historic San Francisco Conference of April 25 - June 26, 1945. The Canadian delegation, led by Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King, included Justice Minister Louis Saint-Laurent and the Canadian Ambassador to the United States, Lester B. Pearson. Although Canada's contribution to the conference was not on a level of the major powers, it was significant nonetheless. Canada proposed a number of provisions to ensure a viable and important role for the small and middle powers, including articles 10 and 12 of the Charter. These articles allow the General Assembly to intercede to maintain or restore order if the Security Council is unable to act because of repeated vetoes by one or more of the superpowers.

During the UN's first decade Canada played a prominent role in launching many of the specialized agencies. The Food and Agriculture Organization was born at a conference in Quebec City. Dr. Brock Chisholm was a central figure in setting up the World Health Organization and became its first Director General. Canadians were leaders in other early activities as well. In 1946, John Humphrey, a law professor at Montreal's McGill University, set up the Division of Human Rights in the United Nations Secretariat and remained head of the post for nearly 20 years. He was responsible for writing the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. As he noted on the 40th anniversary of the adoption of that document, it has become a vital part of international customary law.

In the late 1950s and the 1960s, UN membership increased rapidly—but not without some initial resistance; between 1951 and 1955, all membership applications were vetoed by the U.S.

or U.S.S.R. To break this deadlock Canada suggested admitting all 18 of the candidate countries at the same time. The General Assembly adopted this resolution and the Security Council allowed all but two of the countries, Japan and Outer Mongolia, to be admitted. (Both were admitted later—Japan in 1956 and Outer Mongolia in 1961.) UN membership has increased from the original 51 states to the present 159.

The 1970s witnessed the rapid expansion of the UN's economic programs and specialized agencies as the UN became increasingly involved in assisting the nations of the Third World to develop their economies.

The UN underwent a difficult period in the early 1980s. Arms control negotiations were making no progress. The United States, United Kingdom and Singapore pulled out of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), one of the United Nation's specialized agencies. And the United States unilaterally withheld part of its assessed contributions to the operation of the UN system. However, the UN's quick response to the African famine of 1984-85, the Secretary-General's key involvement in bringing about a ceasefire between Iran and Iraq in 1988, and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in early 1989, among other initiatives, have helped the United Nations system regain the confidence of its member states.

The 1980s, with their increased focus on serious threats to the world environment, massive refugee problems and the sudden spread of AIDS, have also led to the realization that some problems are so universal and complex that they simply cannot be dealt with on a unilateral or bilateral basis and that the United Nations system is a necessary part of the attempt to protect and regulate a shrinking world.

### **Today's UN: How It Operates**

The United Nations is organized into six principal organs: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretariat.

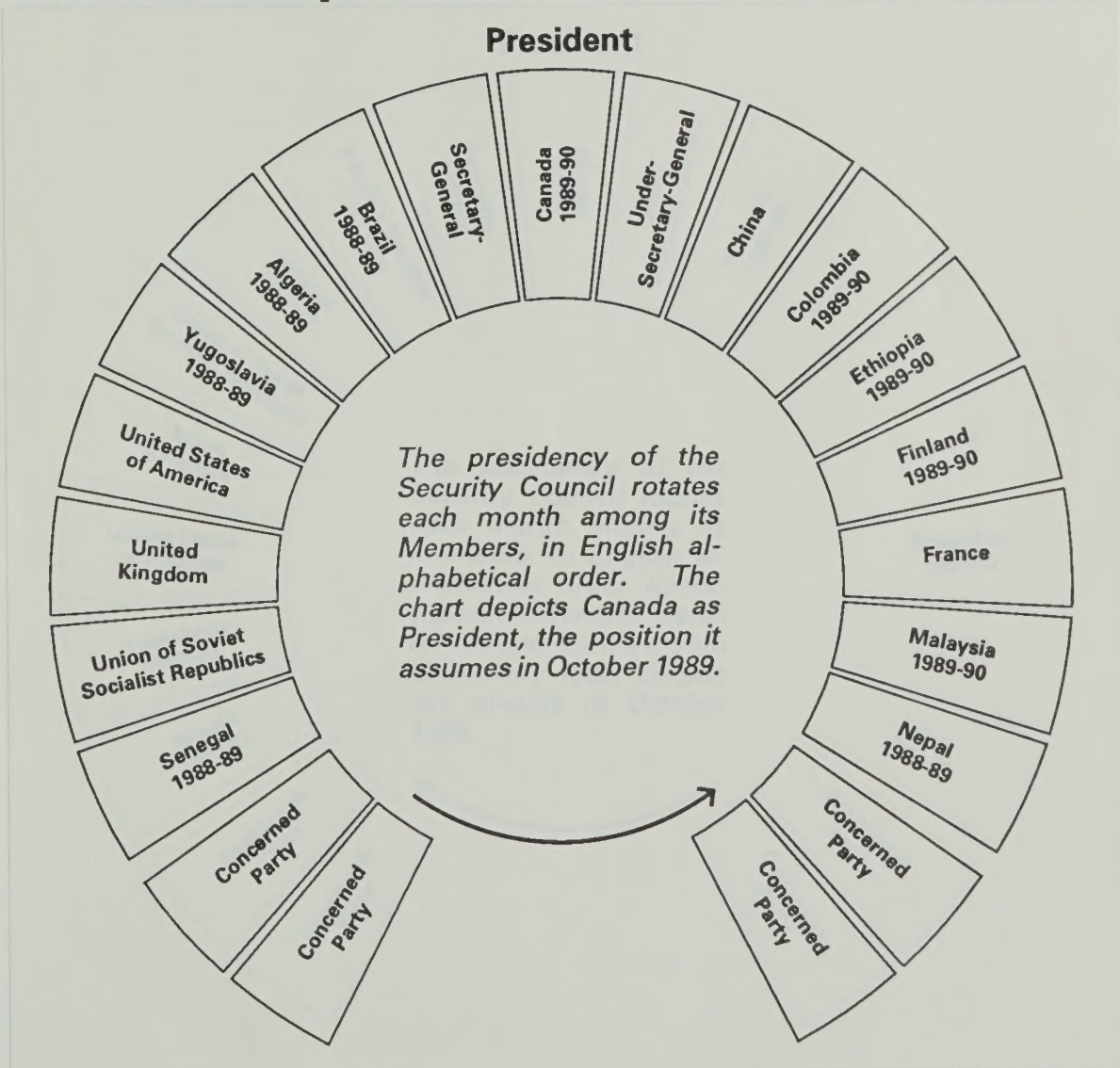
**General Assembly**

The General Assembly forms the hub of the United Nations. All other organizations within the UN system report either directly or indirectly to it.

Once a year the General Assembly meets in New York to discuss world issues, review UN

activities and set the agenda for future UN initiatives. After an opening plenary session, the Assembly breaks into seven committees. Like the Assembly itself, the committees are open to all member countries. The First Committee deals with disarmament and security matters. The

## The Security Council of the United Nations





Second Committee discusses economic and financial matters. The Third Committee deals with social, humanitarian and cultural issues, the Fourth with trusteeship territories (see section on "Trusteeship Council," the Fifth with UN administrative and budgetary matters, the Sixth with legal issues, and the Special Political Committee with a variety of political and security issues such as peacekeeping. The plenary session continues to examine the major issues of regional conflict in the world.

The resolutions worked out in the committees are then voted on at a closing session. Under General Assembly rules, each country has one vote. Resolutions require a majority vote to be adopted.

Though many of its resolutions on important issues have not been implemented, the work of the General Assembly has undoubtedly shaped international affairs. It has declared a broad set of international standards including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It has also focused international attention on global problems such as the arms race, population growth, environmental deterioration, international drug trafficking, the human habitat, and the status of women, the young, the aged, the homeless and the disabled. The Assembly's resolutions concerning these issues are then acted upon by other UN groups.

### *Security Council*

Under the UN Charter, the Security Council is the central authority for maintaining peace and security. It has five permanent members—China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and United States—each with a veto. There are ten other members, five of which are elected each year by the General Assembly for a two-year term.

Under the Charter, all members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the Council's decisions. Over the decades the Council has issued many ceasefire directives that have been instrumental in preventing wider hostilities. It also sends United Nations peacekeeping forces to troubled areas to keep opposing forces apart or to observe and monitor ceasefire or troop withdrawal arrangements.

The Security Council is the only intergovernmental body of the United Nations to be perma-

nently in session. Representatives of countries on the Council are on call 24 hours a day, prepared to meet in the event of major international crises. The Secretary-General participates actively in the deliberations of the Security Council.

Canada has been elected to the Security Council roughly once every decade. Its first term was in 1948-49; the current one is for 1989-90. The Canadian government has viewed participation on the Council as an important multilateral responsibility. Encouraged by signs of decreased tension in the international political environment, Canada sees its latest election to the Council as a chance once again to apply its skills in consensus-building to solving threats to international peace and security.

### *Economic and Social Council*

The 54-member Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meets for two month-long sessions a year (once in New York and once in Geneva). While ECOSOC is designed to co-ordinate the work of the UN's economic and social programs and specialized agencies—organizations that account for over 80 per cent of all UN staff and financial resources—it has not been able to take the initiative that those who drafted the UN Charter had envisioned.

The impact of the UN is most powerfully felt through the programs and specialized agencies that are nominally part of ECOSOC. Canada has played a key role in forming many of these institutions and remains an active supporter of them. They include the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, UNESCO, the International Telecommunications Union, the World Meteorological Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization which is headquartered in Montreal.

Many international conferences are sponsored by ECOSOC. Sometimes a conference has led to the creation of a UN specialized agency to act upon its recommendations. As an example, a Canadian, Maurice Strong, presided over the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972. Its success led the General Assembly to establish the United Nations Environment Program the same year, with Strong as its



first executive director. Other conferences, such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development, provide programs on their own and funnel funds into specialized agencies to help meet UN objectives.

### ***International Court of Justice***

The International Court of Justice consists of 15 judges elected jointly by the General Assembly and the Security Council. Chosen to represent all the main forms of civilization and the principal legal systems of the world, it constitutes the highest international judicial authority. Over the years, the Court has handed down some significant judgments, setting precedents and clarifying the legalities of important questions. It also acts as an advisory council on legal questions for the Secretary-General and the General Assembly.

### ***Trusteeship Council***

The Trusteeship Council was established in 1946 to look after the interests of "trust territories" under foreign administration. The Council has almost completed its work; the only trust territory that remains is Palau, a group of Pacific Islands that remains a strategic trust under the United States. The 10 other original trust territories have either gained independence or merged with adjoining countries.

### ***The Secretariat***

The Secretariat consists of the Secretary-General of the UN and staff recruited from all over the world. In addition to carrying out the directives of the other five principal organs, the Secretary-General has the public role of chief spokesperson for the United Nations. The Secretary-General plays an important political role in identifying and helping to solve international disputes. Members of the Secretariat are not supposed to accept direction from any authority outside the United Nations. For their part, governments are pledged through the Charter to respect the exclusively international character of the Secretariat.

Carrying out the work of the UN—its many programs, conferences and the administration of the UN system itself—requires a substantial amount of money and personnel. There are over 50 000 staff members system-wide.

United Nations activities are funded by the member countries through a combination of assessed dues and voluntary donations. Canada is fourth among member countries in its combined assessed and voluntary contributions, with an overall cash contribution in 1986 of over C\$336 million.

### ***Reversing the Arms Race***

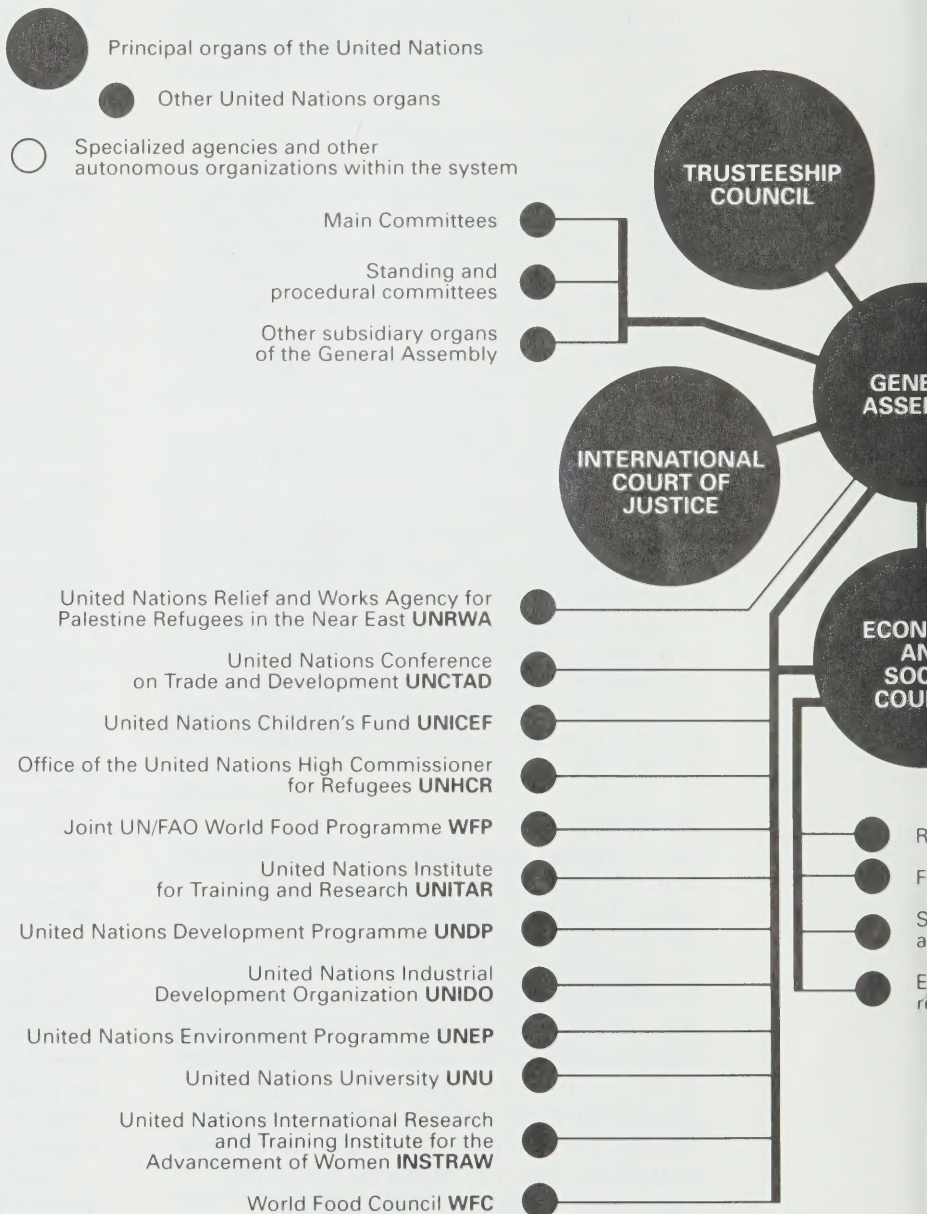
Today, the related issues of arms control and disarmament are seen by Canada and the UN as central requirements for lasting peace and security. Canada participates in all the UN multilateral arms control forums, including the First Committee of the General Assembly and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as well as the Conference on Disarmament, which takes its method of operations from the UN but is a separate body. Each of these forums has its own set of difficulties and complications to overcome. The experience of the three decades has shown that the road to disarmament is travelled only with great difficulty.

The First Committee, which deals with political and security matters, has an agenda comprising the entire range of arms control and disarmament questions. It is a deliberative body, which submits draft resolutions to the General Assembly for adoption on the basis of a majority vote.

The most prominent of the disarmament resolutions brought forth by the First Committee deals with a comprehensive test ban treaty. Since 1945 there have been over 1 500 nuclear explosions. All but two of them (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) have been tests. Canada and many other UN member countries maintain that a ban on testing is a concrete and realistic measure that would contribute significantly to halting the nuclear arms race. Canada has also called for the prohibition of the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons, and idea that is consistently gaining support at the General Assembly.

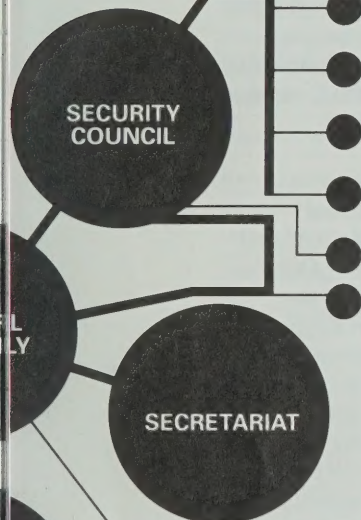
The UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) is another deliberative body, but it devotes attention to only a limited number of arms control and disarmament items. Whereas the First Committee conducts its business through a vote, the UNDC operates by consensus. Among the most notable outcomes of its 1988 month-long meeting were

# The United Nations System





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- **UNDOF** United Nations Disengagement Observer Force
- **UNTAG** United Nations Transition Assistance Group
- **UNAVEM** United Nations Angola Verification Mission
- **UNTSO** United Nations Truce Supervision Organization
- **UNMOGIP** United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
- **UNFICYP** United Nations Peace-keeping Force in Cyprus
- **UNIFIL** United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
- **UNIIMOG** United Nations Iran/Iraq Military Observer Group
- **UNGOMAP** United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan
- Military Staff Committee
- Disarmament Commission

- **IAEA** International Atomic Energy Agency
- **GATT** General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
- **ILO** International Labour Organization
- **FAO** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- **UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- **WHO** World Health Organization
- **IDA** International Development Association
- **IBRD** International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- **IFC** International Finance Corporation
- **IMF** International Monetary Fund
- **ICAO** International Civil Aviation Organization
- **UPU** Universal Postal Union
- **ITU** International Telecommunication Union
- **WMO** World Meteorological Organization
- **IMO** International Maritime Organization
- **WIPO** World Intellectual Property Organization
- **IFAD** International Fund for Agricultural Development

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guidelines for appropriate types of "confidence-building measures" and for the implementation of such measures on a global or regional level. Canada has strongly supported the UNDC's efforts to develop these guidelines. As has been shown through the Egypt-Israel Peace Accord, building confidence between hostile nations can lead to lasting peace.

One of the other significant successes of UNDC during the 1988 session was in arms control verification. For the second year, Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament, Douglas Roche, chaired a working group on the subject. The group reached a consensus on a set of 16 principles related to verification.

As yet, neither UN forums nor bilateral negotiations between the superpowers have led to substantial reductions in nuclear or conventional arsenals. However, the signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Agreement by the U.S. and U.S.S.R. on December 8, 1987, which for the first time bans an entire class of weapons, is encouraging. Canada is anxious to ensure that this agreement leads to further progress towards reducing nuclear arsenals.

As important as they are, nuclear and space negotiations should not distract attention from the necessity to control conventional arms; approximately 80 per cent of global arms spending is on conventional weapons. Conscious of the fact that more than 20 million people had died in "conventional" military conflicts since 1945, Canada strongly supports UN efforts to reduce conventional arsenals.

### **The Peacekeepers**

In an imperfect world, peacekeeping operations have become a necessary part of the effort to defuse international conflicts. Canada has participated in all but 1 of the 19 UN peacekeeping operations and has taken part in 4 peacekeeping missions outside the UN. In response to the 1956 Suez crisis, Canada initiated the General Assembly resolution that formed the first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I). This force created a buffer between Israeli and Egyptian forces for 11 years. Lester B. Pearson, who was Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs at

the time, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in the Suez debate.

While the Suez affair was one of the highlights of Canadian participation in UN peacekeeping, Canada's commitment has spanned more than four decades. Since 1945, more than 80 000 Canadian personnel have worn the United Nations peacekeeper's blue beret.

At present, Canadian peacekeepers are stationed with five UN and one multinational peacekeeping missions. Canada has participated in the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization (UNTSO) since 1954, supervising the general armistice agreements between Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Israel. About 220 Canadian logistics and communications personnel are stationed in the Golan Heights as part of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). This force was created in 1974 after the Yom Kippur War to maintain the ceasefire between Israel and Syria. As well, Canadian troops make up part of the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), established in 1964, and still required to separate the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities.

The Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) began monitoring the provisions of the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty in 1981. Canada provides 135 personnel and nine helicopters to the MFO in the Sinai Peninsula. The MFO was established by a protocol to the Peace Treaty rather than through the United Nations.

In 1988, Canada became involved in two new UN peacekeeping missions. It has committed substantial assistance to the United Nations Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG). Some 400 Canadian troops initially set up the communications system along the 1 200 km ceasefire line. Another 15 officers are among the 500 UN personnel stationed at UNIIMOG headquarters and observer positions. As well, Canada has provided personnel to UNGOMAP, the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

In 1988, the UN peacekeeping forces received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of the role they have played in stabilizing regional conflicts since World War II. In the years to come,



**Canadian Armed Forces participation in international peacekeeping forces and observer missions —  
1947 onwards**

Operation	Location	Dates	Maximum Troop Contribution	Current Troop Contribution
United Nations Command Korea (UNCK)	Korea	1950-54	8 000	—
United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I)	Egypt	1956-67	1 007	—
Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo (ONUC)	Congo	1960-63	421	—
United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA)	West New Guinea (now West Irian)	1962-63	13	—
United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP)	Cyprus	1964-	1 126	580
United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF II)	Egypt (Sinai)	1973-79	1 145	—
United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)	Israel Syria (Golan Heights)	1974-	220	225
United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)	Lebanon	1978 (Apr-Sep)	117	—
United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK)	Korea	1947-48	Unknown	—
United Nations Military Observer Group India-Pakistan (UNMOGIP)	Kashmir	1949-79	27	—
United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization Palestine (UNTSO)	Egypt Israel Jordan Lebanon Syria	1954-	20	22
United Nations Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC)	Korea	1953-	2	1
United Nations Observer Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL)	Lebanon	1958-59	77	—
United Nations Yemen Observer Mission (UNYOM)	Yemen	1963-64	36	—
United Nations India-Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM)	India-Pakistan border	1965-66	112	—
Mission of the Representative of the Secretary-General in the Dominican Republic (DOMREP)	Dominican Republic	1965-66	1	—
International Commission for Supervision and Control (ICSC)	Cambodia Laos Vietnam	1954-74	133	—
International Commission for Control and Supervision (ICCS)	South Vietnam	1973	248	—
Observer Team to Nigeria (OTN)	Nigeria	1968-69	2	—
Multinational Force and Observers (MFO)	Sinai	1981	140	135
United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP)	Afghanistan	1988-	5	5
United Nations Iran/Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIIMOG)	Iran/Iraq	1988-	510	15
United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)	Namibia	1989-	301	232

peacekeeping is likely to remain a continuing feature of international political relations, an important aspect of Canadian involvement in the UN, and a significant complement to the UN's role in mediating regional conflicts and seeking permanent political solutions.

### **Economic Assistance and Development**

As early as the San Francisco Conference, Prime Minister Mackenzie King underlined the importance of establishing a world community in which social security and welfare were part of the common heritage of humanity. To secure that goal, the UN devotes much of its energies towards alleviating poverty and helping to build up the economies of the poorest nations of the world. Not surprisingly, two-thirds of the UN's agencies are devoted to economic and development issues.

United Nations development programs provide much more than just the basic elements of survival such as food and shelter. They assist countries in improving basic infrastructure such as railways, roads, bridges and dams, in establishing more productive farming methods, and in developing health and educational systems.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) administers and co-ordinates the great majority of the technical assistance provided through the UN system. Canada is one of its largest donors. The UNDP, formed in 1966, is essentially a funding agency. The activities it funds are usually carried out by other agencies and organizations within the UN system, such as the World Food Program (Canada is its second-largest contributor), the UN Industrial Development Organization, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Health Organization and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

This last body, UNCTAD, is an important development program in its own right. Its goal is to promote international trade, particularly between countries at different stages of development. UNCTAD meets every four years, while a permanent Trade and Development Board carries out the functions of the conference when it is not in session.

In 1946, the UN created a temporary voluntary fund to help the children of war-ravaged countries, particularly in Europe. That organization has since evolved into the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), one of the best-known of the UN's specialized agencies. UNICEF's main goal now is to provide aid to mothers and children in developing countries.

Many development projects, especially large infrastructure projects, require international financing. The International Bank of Reconstruction and Development and its affiliates, the International Finance Corporation and the International Development Association, extend loans and credit to UN members, especially developing countries. Other UN-affiliated economic organizations include the International Monetary Fund and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The severe drought in sub-Saharan Africa in 1984-85 provides an example of how the UN can play a dramatic role in saving lives in the short term and planning for future prosperity in the medium and long term. In December 1984, the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa was set up by the Secretary-General to co-ordinate the relief operations that saved the lives of millions. In 1986, the General Assembly called a special session to discuss the African crisis. Stephen Lewis, then Canada's Ambassador to the United Nations, chaired the committee that reached a consensus on the Program of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. The program called for massive investment and assistance from the international community and the African states themselves—US \$130 billion in total over the five years. Agricultural development was made the priority, with other major goals being to develop agro-industries, combat the encroachment of desert and reform policies to stimulate agricultural production. In recognition of his achievements, and of Canada's generous response to the African crisis, the Secretary-General appointed Mr. Lewis his special advisor on the Africa Recovery Program.

All of the UN's efforts to increase the standard of living in the developing world, whether in Africa or other continents, could be negated unless



the threat of overpopulation is dealt with effectively. In 1987 the world's population reached five billion, and it will reach six billion in the 1990s. Not all nations share equally in this growth. In the developing world, where three-quarters of the world's population lives, the growth rate is three times that of industrialized countries. The UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) was set up in 1969 to assist other UN organizations, such as UNDP and UNICEF, and to assist national governments in promoting knowledge of family planning and an awareness of the economic and social implications of population changes.

Environmental problems such as global climate change and transboundary pollution are of increasing concern to the international community and have an impact on UN development decisions. The Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, released in 1987, underscored that the only way to stop environmental degradation is through "sustainable development"—to develop industry and employment in ways that do not permanently harm the environment.

The challenge of the report has been taken up by the UN Environment Program (UNEP), which plays a catalytic role within the UN system. Through its Environment Fund, UNEP finances such programs as regional and global environmental monitoring and environmental research. As well, UNEP sponsored the first international agreement on the environment, called the Montreal Protocol, which commits the countries that signed the document to reducing production and consumption of chemical that destroy the earth's ozone layer by 50 per cent by 1999.

### **Setting Standards in Human Rights**

The UN adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Since that time, it has worked out international human rights covenants dealing with civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights as well as many legal conventions on specific issues such as torture and discrimination against women.

Human rights are addressed directly by the General Assembly's Third Committee. By and

large the committee discusses human rights issues as reported to it by the Commission on Human Rights. This commission, formed in 1946, reports on the full range of human rights concerns, such as civil liberties, and discrimination by race, sex, language or religion.

Of particular interest to Canada has been the UN's role in the issue of equality of the sexes. Canada is serving its third consecutive term on the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). As well, in 1989 a Canadian, Sharon Capeling, became director of the UN Fund for Women (UNIFEM), which is devoted exclusively to the needs of women in developing countries. Canada is a signatory to a UN convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and continues to press countries that have ratified the agreement to live by its terms.

The Commission on the Status of Women is currently working to integrate into the entire UN system the recommendations, called the Forward-Looking Strategies, of a conference in Nairobi in 1985 that concluded the UN Decade for Women.

Another UN responsibility that fits under the "human rights" banner is that of looking after refugees. Aid to refugees is administered by the UN through the Offices of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), of which Canada has been an executive committee member since its inception in 1951. The UNHCR identifies the needs of refugees, provides international protection to them, co-ordinates and finances relief efforts and seeks to help them either to be repatriated or to find a new home. Canada has funded another UN refugee program, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), since its inception. Howard Kennedy, a Canadian, was the first director of UNRWA, which provides assistance, education and other services to the Palestinians living in the occupied territories and in the Arab states surrounding Israel.

### **International Law**

Most of Canada's international interests and activities are governed in some degree by international treaties. International law has served and should continue to serve as a way to advance





Canadian interests. At the same time, the rule of law is itself a Canadian interest, as is the promotion of international order through the further elaboration of legal rules to govern the relations among states.

Canada contributes to developing and codifying international law by participating in the International Law Commission, a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, and through a variety of legal initiatives. For example, in February 1988, on the initiative of Canada and Austria, a conference at the International Civil Aviation Organization headquarters in Montreal adopted an international protocol to suppress terrorist acts at airports. A month later, Canada again played a leading role in a meeting of the International Maritime Organization in Rome that adopted two international agreements to suppress terrorist acts aboard ships and offshore structures.

Legal work continues towards a cleaner environment. The first international environmental agreement—the Montreal Protocol on the Protection of the Ozone Layer—signed in 1988 has since been followed up by meetings of legal and policy experts to further elaborate national standards, regional agreements and global protocols (dealing, for example, with climate change) and an umbrella framework convention to protect the atmosphere.

### Continuing a Tradition of Influence

Much has changed in the world since the United Nations was formed. Much has changed within the United Nations itself as it has evolved from a small organization of some 51 states to a substantial organization with almost universal membership. Yet the goals of the UN today remain essentially the same as when it was founded. On September 29, 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney closed his address to the United Nations General Assembly with these words:

*The agenda before the United Nations is compelling, and the choices are clear: to manage the irresistible forces of change that swirl around us. To acknowledge the interdependence of our world and of the issues before us. To ensure a more peaceful, more prosperous, more humane world, a world in which strong nations are just, the rich nations*

*generous: A world in which all nations have legitimate hope for greater economic and social justice, understanding as we must that there is but one earth for us to preserve for our children.*

This publication is part of a series dealing with various aspects of Canadian foreign policy. Additional copies can be obtained from the Domestic Communications Division (BFC), Department of External Affairs, 125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa K1A 0G2.

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